

# Manatee Facts

## West Indian Manatee

*Trichechus manatus*

**Length:** 12 plus feet

**Weight:** over 3,500 pounds

**Color:** gray to gray-brown

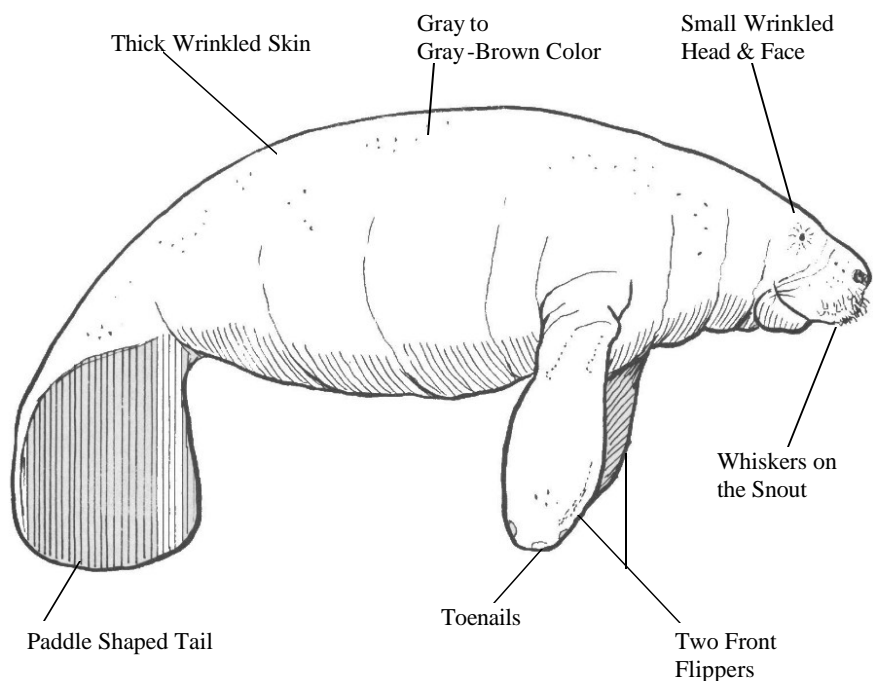
**Food:** 100 pounds of aquatic plants a day

**Reproduction:** One calf every 2 to 5 years

**Range in US:** North Carolina to Texas, mainly Florida

**Location:** Rivers, canals, estuaries, saltwater bays, & occasionally the open ocean

- ◆ Manatees only have molars to grind their food.
- ◆ Manatees chew two times per second.
- ◆ Manatee teeth are constantly being replaced as they wear down and fall out.
- ◆ The intestine of an adult manatee can measure 130 feet long.
- ◆ Manatees only breath through their nostrils.
- ◆ Manatee can hold their breath for up to 24 minutes.
- ◆ Manatee lungs are 2/3 the length of its body.
- ◆ A manatee cannot turn its head sideways, it must turn its whole body.
- ◆ It takes 13 months for a manatee to be born.
- ◆ Calves spend two years with their mothers learning the migration routes.



## Manatees are Mammals

Manatees breath air and have hair like all other mammals. They look like a relative of dolphins and whales but manatees are closer related to elephants.

## Little Mermaid?

When the Spanish Explorers reached Florida they thought the Manatees were mermaids.

# Manatee Math

1) Manatees eat for up to **8** hours a day. They eat up to **100** pounds of aquatic plants a day. How many pounds of plants do they eat an hour?

---

2) Manatees chew **2** times per second. They eat for **8** hours a day. How many times do manatees chew a day?

---

3) A manatees heart beats at **60** times per minute. A humans heart beats at **80** times per minute. How many minutes must pass for a manatee's heart to beat the same number of times as the human's heart beats in **12** minutes?

---

4) Manatees rest for up to **12** hours a day. While resting they breathe once every **5** minutes. How many times does the manatee breathe while resting?

---

5) The Indian River Lagoon is **156** miles long. The manatee swims at **4** MPH. How many days will it take a manatee to swim the length of the Lagoon?

---

## In The Lexicon

**Prehensile** - Adapted for seizing or holding, especially by by wrapping around an object.

Manatees lips are **prehensile**. They grab and tear their food with their lips.

**Gestation** - Pregnancy. The period of carrying developing offspring between conception and birth.

The **gestation** period of the manatee is about 13 months. Then the calf spends two years in the mother's protection.

# Manatee Math

1) Manatees eat for up to **8** hours a day. They eat up to **100** pounds of aquatic plants a day. How many pounds of plants do they eat an hour?

Pounds of food / hours a day  
 $100/8 =$   
**12.5 pounds of food per hour**

**Key**

2) Manatees chew **2** times per second. They eat for **8** hours a day. How many times do manatees chew a day?

2 chews per second X 60 seconds X 60 minutes X 8 hours per day = Chews per day  
 $2 \times 60 = 120$   $120 \times 60 = 7200$   
 $7200 \times 8 =$  **57,600 chews per day**

3) A manatees heart beats at **60** times per minute. A humans heart beats at **80** times per minute. How many minutes must pass for a manatee's heart to beat the same number of times as the human's heart beats in **12** minutes?

Humans beats/min X Time = Manatee beats/min X Time  
 $80 \times 12 = 60x$   
 $960 = 60x$   
 $x = 960 / 60$   
**x = 16 minutes**

4) Manatees rest for up to **12** hours a day. While resting they breathe once every **5** minutes. How many times does the manatee breathe while resting?

12 hours X 60 minutes/hour = 720 minutes  
 $720 \text{ minutes} / 5 = 144$   
**144 times in 12 hours**

5) The Indian River Lagoon is **156** miles long. The manatee swims at **4** MPH. How many days of constant swimming would it take a manatee to swim the length of the Lagoon?

$156 \text{ miles} / 4 \text{ MPH} = 39 \text{ hours}$   
 $39 \text{ hours} / 24 \text{ hours/day} =$  **1.625 days** or  
 $39 \text{ hours} - 24 \text{ hours} = 15 \text{ hours}$  so **1 day 15 hours**

## In The Lexicon

**Prehensile** - Adapted for seizing or holding, especially by by wrapping around an object.

Manatees lips are **prehensile**. They grab and tear their food with their lips.

**Gestation** - Pregnancy. The period of carrying developing offspring between conception and birth.

The **gestation** period of the manatee is about 13 months. Then the calf spends two years in the mother's protection.